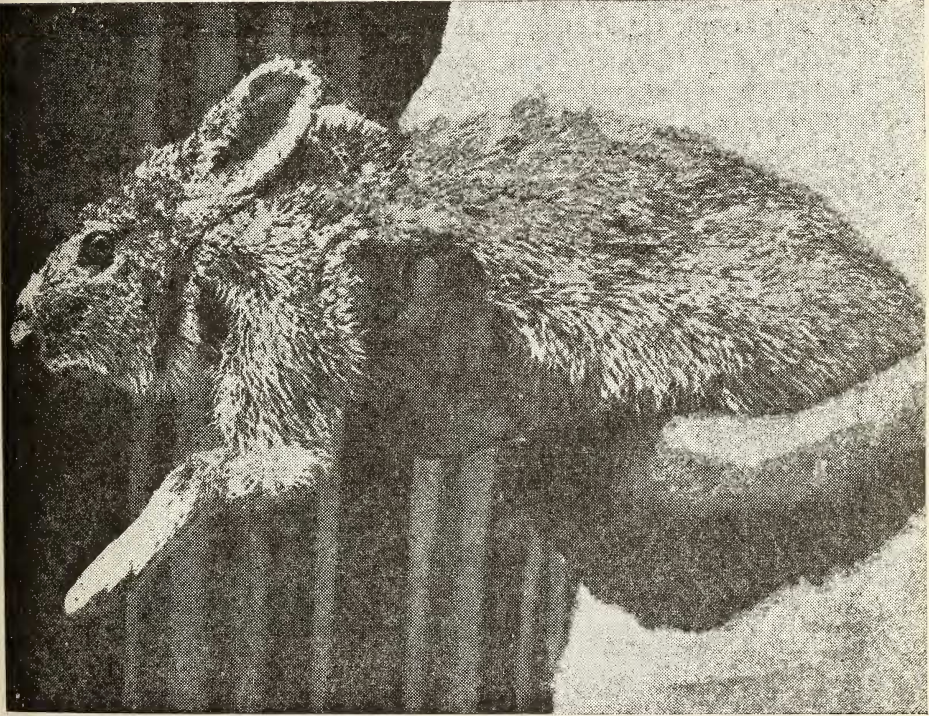


## Miscellaneous Notes

### 1. A NOTE ON THE 'HISPID HARE *CAPROLAGUS HISPIDUS* (PEARSON 1939)

(With a photo)

The Hispid Hare or Harsh-furred Hare had not been noticed since 1956 when a German Zoological team collected one in the Goalpara Division of Assam, and this was examined by Dr. B. Biswas of the Indian Museum, Calcutta. A village headman near Rowta Reserved Forest of Darrang District of Assam, informed the Forest Range Officer that these hares existed in that locality in the winter of 1958-59, but none of these were caught. As Simon (1967) states, the Hispid Hare probably still



Hispid Hare (*Caprolagus hispidus*) Assam, May 1971. (Photo: Author)

exists in a few isolated parts of its range in the grassy or scrub-forest areas along the foothills of the Himalayas in U.P., Bihar, West Bengal and Assam.

One adult male of the Hispid Hare was caught on 22nd April, 1971 by Mr. Virenda Singh, in the thatchlands between Rajagarh Forest Reserve and the Attareekhat Tea Estate, in the Mangaldai sub-division

of Darrang District, Assam. This was in the same area, and at a similar time that the Pigmy Hogs *Sus salvanius* were caught.

When I examined the Hispid Hare, it had been in captivity for four weeks. The specimen had lost its left hind-leg, but otherwise was in quite good condition. It had been maintained on Dhoob grass, *Cynodon dactylus* with the roots kept on, and soaked dried peas; when offered lettuce, cabbage, carrot or cucumber they had been left untouched.

The most distinguishing characteristic of the Hispid Hare is the small size of the ears. The colour of the pelage is dark brown and blackish with numerous scattered whitish bristly hairs. The dimensions of the adult male examined were as follows :- Nose tip to base of tail 18"; shoulder height 7"; tail  $\frac{1}{2}$ "; ear  $2\frac{1}{4}$ ". The specimen was housed on an earthen floor, and as Tate (1947) states, that although these animals are reputed to make burrows the claws seem to be too long and slender for digging. There had been no signs of the specimen doing any digging in the earth during its month in captivity, although it has proved to be of a nervous disposition, and in keeping with the majority of *Lepus* species has an extreme tendency to flight when alarmed.

If, as advised for *Sus salvanius*, a comprehensive evaluation of the habitat in the Mangaldai foothill area of Assam, and a professional capture programme is embarked upon, it is recommended that the Hispid Hare should be included in this programme.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR,  
JERSEY WILDLIFE PRESERVATION TRUST,  
JERSEY, CHANNEL ISLANDS,

JEREMY J. C. MALLINSON

August, 1971.

#### REFERENCES

- SIMON, NOEL (1967): Mammalia, Survival Service Commission Red Data Book. Morges, Switzerland.      TATE, G. H. H. (1947): Mammals of eastern Asia. MacMillan, New York.

## 2. REACTION OF CHITAL [*AXIS AXIS* (ERXLEBEN)] TO JUNGLE CAT *FELIS CHAUS* GULDENSTAEDT

In March 1970 I had occasion to note the response of Chital to the presence of the Jungle Cat, in Corbett National Park. In the Dhikala area of the sanctuary grazing herds of Chital (30, 25, 25 & 40 in strength), were observed near a ground salt lick on a few occasions (dates: 8/iii, 10/iii, 11/iii & 15/iii). On seeing the cat, the Chital raised their head and with the tail upraised gave the alarm call. A few individuals scratched the ground with their fore legs. Afterwards 3 or 4 Chital, normally headed